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Book the Gift of my
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I. Raynolds

Mr. *Checkley's*

SERMON

ON

HEBREWS II. 14, 15.

Upon a ſorrowful Occaſion:

The death of Mrs. Mary Gallop

Mr. Oberlin's

SERMON

Martha Raynolds

The Christian triumphing over Death through CHRIST.

A

SERMON

Preached NOVEMBER 10. 1765.

At the second Church of CHRIST, in BOSTON;

Upon a mournful Occasion.

Published with some Enlargements.

The second EDITION.

By SAMUEL CHECKLEY, jun'r.

Pastor of said Church.

O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength Sin is the Law, but Thanks be to GOD *who giveth us the Victory thro' our* LORD JESUS CHRIST. Apostle PAUL.

BOSTON: N. E.

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☞ *THE following Sermon is publiſhed at the earneſt Deſire of many who heard it in Public, and of others who afterwards heard it in Private; ſuch were the Reaſons offered for the Publication, as conſtrained the Author to conſent: If it ſhould pleaſe GOD to own it for the Good of any, let Him have all the Praiſe; to whoſe Bleſſing it is committed for Succeſs.*

A Funeral SERMON.

HEBREWS II. 14, 15.

Foraſmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Fleſh and Blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through Death he might deſtroy him that had the power of Death, that is, the devil: And deliver them who through fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage.

THERE is nothing more certain, nor is there any thing more ſerious and ſolemn than death. Happy, inconceivably happy are all they who are prepared for this important event; for over ſuch the ſecond death can have no power. O that we were all wiſe, that we underſtood this, that we did but conſider our latter end! May it pleaſe that God from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift, to bleſs us with this true wiſdom! This would bring us into a glorious meetneſs

for

for the time of our departure hence, whenever and in what way ſoever it ſhould pleaſe the ſovereign Lord of life to order. This would render our condition ſafe, even tho' it ſhould be our portion to walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light: Nay, as my text expreſſes it, tho' "through fear of death we ſhould all our life-time be ſubject to bondage."

Of this the word of God hath given us the moſt comfortable aſſurance, and we have ſeen and heard it verified in the joyful deaths of many, whoſe lives, if I may ſo ſpeak, have been crowded with ſpiritual anxiety and diſtreſs. That God, to whom they have devoted themſelves in the everlaſting covenant of his grace, and who hath ſaid to his people, "I will never fail you, nor forſake you," hath made good his word on which he hath cauſed their ſouls to reſt; they have found him to be a preſent help in the laſt, in the greateſt extremity: That Jeſus, in whom they have believed, as one "able to keep that which they have committed to him againſt that day," hath afforded them his comforting preſence, upon which they have been able to ſay, "tho' I walk thro' the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." "Chriſt will ranſom me from the power of the grave; he will redeem me from death; O death, he will be thy plagues; O grave, he will be thy deſtruction."

From the words theſe two points preſent to our conſideration:

It is the melancholly portion of ſome of God's dear children, "thro' their whole life-time to be ſubject to bondage thro' fear of death."

The

THE Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered death for them, that thro' death he might be able to appear for their help and deliverance.

FIRST. It is the melancholly portion of ſome of God's dear children, "thro' their whole life-time to be ſubject to bondage thro' fear of death." I ſay, of ſome of God's children; for ſome there are and not a few, who have a comfortable hope of their good eſtate; they are above diſtreſſing fears, and can ſay of the bleſſed Jehovah, "this God is my God for ever and ever, he will be my guide even unto death;" they can go about their worldly concerns having the light of God's countenance lifted up upon them, and a comfortable aſſurance that the work of divine grace is carrying on in their ſouls; they love to come and appear before God, finding by experience that Lord's days, and eſpecially, when they are admitted to ſit down at the holy ſupper, are to them an earneſt, a pledge & foretaſte of that reſt which remains to the people of God *above*, in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.

WHEN they meditate upon the infinite Deity, it is with ſacred pleaſure, believing that he is reconciled to them thro' his dear ſon, who hath born their iniquities in his own ſacred body upon the tree, and thereby made atonement for them.

WHEN they meditate upon Chriſt, it is with joy and faith, believing in him not only as their atoning, but their interceeding Savior.

WHEN they meditate upon death, it is with ſenſible comfort, believing that nothing ſhall ever be able to ſeparate them from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus their Lord.

SUCH

SUCH persons as these are indeed highly favored of heaven, and have unspeakable occasion to bless the name of the Most High; it ever becomes them to speak well of him, and celebrate the praises of his marvellous grace.

BUT this is not the case of all God's children; there are many with whom he does not deal after this sort. Tho' they are equally beloved by God, tho' they are equally dear to him, and shall as surely be saved at last as any, yet they have not that comfort from it that others have; their minds are harrassed with many fears; they are called to encounter many doubts and scruples.

WHEN they consider God, they are afraid of him, afraid whether their peace hath ever been made with him; they are afraid that he is still their enemy, that he hath never caused his anger towards them to cease; they are afraid that they are yet in the unhappy number to whom belongs no peace, and with whom he is angry every day.

WHEN they think of the blessed Jesus, they are afraid that they have never believed in him in earnest; that at best their faith hath been only a doctrinal, speculative faith that hath no transforming influence upon the heart: They are very ready to question whether they have any solid foundation to say of Christ as the disciple Thomas did, my Lord, and my God.

WHEN they think of death, it is with horror and amazement, fearing they have no part in Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, and so don't belong to those, whom God will bring with him another day, that they may behold *his* face in righteousness, and be forever satisfied with his likeness;

neſs; which way ſoever they turn their eyes, every thing looks gloomy and dark, and they are ready to give up all the gracious experiences they have in time paſt hoped they have had.

Sometimes death in itſelf, is a terror to them, and they dread the ſeaſon when the union between ſoul and body muſt certainly be diſſolved; it ſhocks them to conſider that the time is approaching very faſt, when death will make a melancholly alteration thro'out their whole frame; when their pulſe ſhall intermit as a forerunner of ſomething diſmal they have been expecting; when they ſhall labor and gaſp for breath, and every method tried for their relief by ſollicitous friends, ſhall fail; when a cold chill ſhall ſeize every member and limb; when the body may expire in convulſion and agony, and the ſoul it's intimate companion ſhall enter upon ſome unknown, untried ſtate, till the morning of the reſurrection, while the body is converted into duſt and rottenneſs.

When corruption hath done its work, you ſee the earth, that once was fleſh; you ſee the bones, you ſee the ſkulls, you ſee the ſockets in which the eyes once ſparkled, without the leaſt trace of what was once comely and attracting: This melancholly change doth death make, and that univerſally and unavoidably, and the conſideration of it renders death terrible indeed to ſome chriſtians; they cannot employ their thoughts upon it without ſhuddering, and yet they are afraid to put it far away from them, becauſe it muſt come.

And here by the way I would obſerve, that theſe fears they are ready to improve as an argument againſt themſelves, concluding that if they were

the children of God in ſincerity, they ſhould not be thus afraid to die; they don't bear in mind as they ought to do, that there is in all perſons, both good and bad, a natural abhorrence and fear of death, which grace cannot deſtroy, any more than it can human nature it ſelf.

MANY, even aſſured chriſtians, have not been at all afraid to be dead, while the tho't of paſſing thro' the dark valley hath damped their ſpirits. The apoſtle Paul himſelf deſireth not death, but the life which followeth it; he deſired "to depart and to be with Chriſt;" that is, he choſe rather to be in heaven than upon earth, and as there was no other way to it than by death, he choſe to ſubmit to the paſſage, rather, than not be there: God does not command any of his children to deſire death it ſelf, nor forbid them fearing it as an evil to nature; and it would be much better for ſome chriſtians, if they thought of this more than they have been won't to do.

BUT that which makes death moſt of all terrible, is, the apprehenſion of what comes after it; here, here is the wormwood and the gall; here, is what ſinks their ſpirits, and at times overwhelms them in diſtreſs; the thought of another world, and of their going into it, as they certainly muſt, makes them tremble. They are afraid of death in the natural ſenſe of it, but they are much more, inconceivably more afraid of eternal death; they have ſuch a ſenſe of their ſins as committed againſt the greateſt and the beſt of beings, as makes them fearful of entertaining the leaſt hope that they ſhall obtain mercy, and ſo eſcape the "ſecond death;" they have ſuch a ſenſe of their own unworthineſs on the account of their ſinfulneſs, as leads them at times

to

to be in great fear that the door of mercy is abſolutely ſhut upon them; that, that favor which they might once have obtained, is "clean gone forever," that God will be favorable no more.

THEY have awful apprehenſions of the holineſs and the juſtice of God; his "being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" it being impoſſible for him to endure the leaſt ſin, occaſions in them a moſt melancholly uneaſineſs, leſt ſuch ſins as their's, ſuch for number, and ſo aggravated as their's have been, and in a particular manner accompanied with ſo much baſe ingratitude, cannot be forgiven; they are free to acknowledge that the ſins of others may be pardoned thro' the abundant riches of divine grace, but as to themſelves, they are afraid they have committed the unpardonable ſin, and that nothing remains for them but "a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to devour" them; this makes them to dread the wrath of God on their own account in particular, and ſay, "who can dwell with the devouring fire? Who can dwell with the everlaſting burnings?"

"Now the ſorrows of death compaſs them about, and the pains of hell take hold upon them;" now they cry unto the Lord, "O Lord, I beſeech thee deliver my ſoul!" but God ſtill turns a deaf ear to their prayer; they have no light, no comfort; they ſtill walk in darkneſs. Now, as "one obſerves," "In the deep diſtreſs and clear ſight of the amazing vileneſs of their own hearts, and extenſive views of their own numberleſs tranſgreſſions and follies, in their multiplied aggravations, they may have ſuch terrible apprehenſions of the glorious holineſs, purity, majeſty and reſentment of God againſt them, as that by reaſon hereof they may not be able to en-

dure; and the terrors of the Almighty, with the ſenſe of their own horrible corruptions, may ſo fill and agitate their ſouls, as to overbear their feeble powers, and hurry them on to great confuſion and diſtraction. And ſometimes when it comes to this, there is no regular exerciſe either of reaſon or of grace."

Now the buſy adverſary improves the ſeaſon of their diſtreſs, by injecting into their minds the moſt horrible and blaſphemous thoughts of God, as tho' he was not ſuch a God as he is repreſented to be in his word, as though his promiſes were as ſo many artful inſinuations to deceive them; yea, ſometimes they are tempted not only to deny all their paſt experiences, but to conclude that there is in reality no God at all: Now, now are they in "the horrible pit, and the miry clay where they can find no ſtanding;" now, now is the time, when they are ready to ſay, "O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy ſore diſpleaſure; for thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore; for mine iniquities are gone over mine head as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." Now, now they have awful diſcoveries of the dreadfulneſs of God's diſpliceney of ſin and of the great day, as though it muſt of neceſſity be a dreadful day to them, and much more tolerable for any ſinners upon the face of the earth, than for them; they are ready to tremble (tho' without juſt reaſon) as Fælix did, who had large occaſion for it, being exceeding guilty, and ſo unprepared for ſuch an event; their ſouls are full of trouble, and they at times ſeem as tho' they were ſinking down into the pit, there to be tormented forever with the devil and his angels; God's wrath lieth hard upon them, and they are afflicted and ready to die; the terrors of God come round them daily like water,

they

they compaſs them about together, and they ſcarce know what it is to enjoy one day free from ſpiritual perplexity; even when they are among their friends and acquaintance, and reſolve and endeavor to appear pleaſant, if poſſible, as others do, there is no one knows but God and their own ſouls, the bitter exerciſe of mind they have paſſed through.

They are ſubject to bondage "thro' fear of death," and are at times a terror to themſelves. This expreſſion of being ſubject to bondage, may refer to the old teſtament-ſaints, who were peculilarly thus in ſubjection, as they were not ſo clearly informed of that "life and immortality which are brought to light by the goſpel;" but doubtleſs others are included here, the children of God I mean, at this day, ſome of whom are exerciſed with great perplexity on this very account; their fears are ſo great as to get the maſtery at times, and hence they are not improperly ſpoken of as ſlaves; no higher can they riſe above this wretched ſtate, than as a ſenſe of freedom from the cauſes of it, is applied to their ſouls by the holy ſpirit. While this application is withheld, while the holy ſpirit deſiſts from witneſſing this freedom, they are much in the dark, and in many inſtances in the moſt diſtreſſing bondage, vaſtly more grievous and intolerable than the Egyptian ſlavery of old; in this ſituation they are awfully tempted to neglect duty, as though it would be altogether in vain and to no purpoſe to engage in it; or perhaps as tho' it would be actually a ſin in them to attempt it: And when God ſtands by them ſo far as that they are "not tempted above what they are able to bear," yet they have no encouragement in duty, that God doth remember them "with that favor which he bears to his people."

Such

SUCH a caſe as this muſt needs be very ſorrowful and afflictive, and it is one of thoſe dark diſpenſations that ſometimes worry the minds of ſome of God's dear children to a great degree. Can ſuch an afflicted condition as this, ſay they, poſſibly be the condition of one for whom Chriſt hath laid down his moſt precious life? Of one whom God hath effectually called by his grace to himſelf, to be a monument of his everlaſting redeeming love? To which I anſwer, melancholly as this repreſentation of the caſe makes it to be, ſo it certainly is, and hath been with reſpect to many, ſome intentions of which it may not be amiſs to aſſign with humility, before we proceed any further.

ONE intention may be to manifeſt the divine ſovereignty, to teach the children of God that he may do what he will with his own, that he may give or withhold the conſolations of his grace, according to his pleaſure, without being accountable to any of his creatures; and happy they who are brought to acknowledge this in the midſt of the fiery trial.

ANOTHER intention may be to convince them what an evil thing and a bitter, ſin is; this is the occaſion of all that horror, diſtreſs and darkneſs, which the people of God have endured in all ages: Had it not been for this, there had been nothing of this ſort to trouble the children of God in ſuch a dreadful manner. This then being the cauſe, to know by experience what the ſad effect is, muſt have a direct tendency to convince them that ſin is the greateſt evil that can be; not only the abominable thing which God's ſoul hates, but which they themſelves ought to hate, without having the leaſt ſpark of affection for it, remaining in them.

A FURTHER intention may be to hide pride from their eyes, and make them more humble; that they may have more affecting diſcoveries of their own ſinfulneſs, vileneſs and ill-deſerving; that they may be brought to lie low before God; that whereas, they once heard of him only by the hearing of the ear, their eyes may now ſee him, and that in conſequence of it they may "abhor themſelves and repent in duſt and aſhes." And when their ſouls are brought to this, it will have this effect to empty them of themſelves, and give them more enlarged and melting views of the free and rich grace of God in their ſalvation; it will lead them more highly to prize that perfect and all-ſufficient righteouſneſs which Chriſt hath wrought out for them, and to repair to him with more thankful ſouls, as their glorious prevailing advocate at the right hand of the Father.

ANOTHER intention may be to wean them more from this world, and make them long after heaven, that place of undiſturbed felicity and joy. Notwithſtanding the ſaving change that hath paſſed upon them in their regeneration, there is ſtill an attachment to this world, that is criminal in them; they are too apt to let their hearts wander after the "broken ciſterns that can hold no water;" they are too apt to go aſtray from God "the fountain," who is at all times worthy of their moſt ardent affections: Such behaviour as this cannot but be diſpleaſing to their heavenly father, and therefore he viſits their tranſgreſſions with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes; he brings them into ſome amazing tribulation, that hereby he may afreſh whet their appetite after ſpiritual enjoyments, and the bleſſed entertainments of the cœleſtial ſtate.

I WOULD obſerve further, that in ſome chriſtians, this ſpiritual diſtreſs, horror and great darkneſs, may be in a great meaſure owing to their particular turn of conſtitution; they may be of a dark and gloomy mind, ſo as that it may be impoſſible, do all you can, to raiſe them to any high degree of joy upon any occaſion. And in ſuch caſes it is far from being an uncommon thing to find them troubled with almoſt a conſtant ſeries of grievous bodily infirmities and diſorders; theſe tend in their very nature, to render life uneaſy and uncomfortable; and much more ſo, when they ſeize upon a conſtitution that was not ſound before. Here I ſhall make uſe of the words of a divine of our own; * "Beſides the various and diſordered ele-"ments without, ſays he, beſides the various ſub-"ſtances received in us, and their various trouble-"ſome impreſſions on us, ſome unhappy conſtitution "of the nervous ſyſtem, or other parts of this frail "body, either in it's primary formation, or ſome "other incident under the divine direction, may "occaſion a great variety of diſorders, firſt of the "body, and then thereby of the mind. The mu-"tual influence between theſe two very different "parts of the human compoſition, is too myſterious "for our preſent underſtanding; but that they have "ſuch a mutual influence on each other, we moſt "certainly know by univerſal and perpetual ex-"perience. Diſturbed ideas in the mind, ſurpriz-"ingly diſturb the body; and diſorders in the "body

* The late reverend and excellent Mr. PRINCE, in a ſermon publiſhed by him upon a very melancholly occaſion, the death of the late EDWARD BROMFIELD, Eſq; a perſon though eminently good, yet remarkably viſited with ſpiritual exerciſes.

"body, as ſtrongly affect and diſturb the mind, "tho' the immediate cauſe of this, ſays he, I can "reſolve into nothing elſe, but the continual agency "of God within us, according to particular rules "his conſummate wiſdom hath preſcribed." Thus my author. I paſs on to the

SECOND head of diſcourſe. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered death for his people, that thro' death he might be able to appear for their help and deliverance. Here, here is joyful tidings for them who are mourners in our Zion; and unleſs their ſouls abſolutely refuſe to be comforted, they will encourage their drooping ſpirits. Jeſus their friend hath appeared for them; he took not on him the nature of angels, but he hath aſſumed the human nature; "as the children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf took part of the ſame;" "we have not a high prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of their infirmities, but hath been in all points tempted like as they are, yet without ſin;" he hath born their griefs and carried their ſorrows; he knows by experience what their ſpiritual troubles and conflicts are, and indeed in a manner vaſtly beyond what they ever felt, as we may eaſily collect from what he underwent in the garden, and upon the croſs. O how amazing were his ſufferings when his ſoul was "exceeding ſorrowful even unto death," when he cried out once and again in great bitterneſs, "Father, if it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me!" But eſpecially, how amazing were his ſufferings towards the cloſe of life, when the powers of darkneſs beſet him with the moſt cruel tormenting blaſphemies, when for holy and wiſe reaſons they were permitted for a while to vent their rage and malice upon him, which no doubt they did to the utmoſt of their

power, and with the greateſt pleaſure! If we add to this, the hidings of God's face in ſuch a ſore ſeaſon, which conſtrained him to cry out, my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me, we may well think that he felt to the extent, and even more than any of his people have done, and therefore cannot but have a ſympathy with them in their greateſt diſtreſs. But this alone was not ſufficient, he actually ſubmitted to death that he might taſte it for them; he bowed his head and gave up the ghoſt; he hath alſo lain in the grave, where they muſt all be laid; he not only died, but he was buried for their ſakes; "on the third day he roſe from the dead, according to the ſcriptures, and is become the firſt fruits of them that ſleep." Thus "through death, he hath deſtroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;" by his dying on the croſs he hath aboliſhed the power of this grand adverſary, ſo that he ſhall never recover it again. "The "authority, ſays Mr. Pool, the right and command, "the keys of death, are in Chriſt's hands only, and "he employs him as an executioner in it, only "when and as he pleaſes" That he hath deſtroyed his power, is evident from his riſing from the grave, and now "he is alive and lives for evermore;" and not only ſo, but he will rule and reign 'till the laſt enemy it ſelf ſhall be intirely overcome. This is one glorious effect of his ſubmitting unto death.—Another effect is, that he might deliver them who "thro' fear of death have been ſubject to bondage." He brings them into ſuch a ſtate, as that they ſhall actually be the ſubjects of this deliverance, in all parts of it, whether they have, or have not the comfort of it, at preſent.

At their firſt converſion he diſpoſſeſſed the ſtrong man armed, who had led them captive at his pleaſure;

ſure; at that very time when they were brought ſavingly home to Chriſt, he ſtruck off their captive chains, and made them free: He took the poſſeſſion of their hearts for himſelf, and ſet up his throne there. In Chriſt Jeſus they are delivered from the guilt of all their ſins, how numerous, and how aggravated ſoever; in him alſo are they freed from the power of their luſts, ſo that no iniquity hath the dominion over them; being made thus free, they are enabled to ſerve him "in holineſs and righteouſneſs," the remaining part of their lives.

When you tell them of this, they will be ready indeed to deny it all, and ſay, that it cannot poſſibly be; but this does not render it at all uncertain, whether what I have here aſſerted is true. There is really a good work begun in them, and God will not forſake the work of his own hands, but "will perform it unto the day of Chriſt Jeſus." Tho' they are backward to acknowledge any thing of this kind, his ſpirit is really in their hearts, carrying on the moſt bleſſed deſigns; if not building them up in comfort, yet building them up in holineſs; making them more patient, more humble, more meek and lowly, more heavenly and leſs earthly minded, fixing their hearts more intenſely "on the things that are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God." He promotes their growth in grace, and the more they ſow in tears, it is that they may reap a more plentiful harveſt in glory.

As they approach towards the concluſion of their continuance here, their meetneſs for the inheritance of the ſaints in light increaſeth, and perhaps their ſpiritual darkneſs may increaſe too; but ſometimes he ſhines in upon them in a glorious manner, and

gives them the "earneſt of their inheritance," before they "go hence and are here no more." He brings them out of great and diſtreſſing darkneſs, into marvellous light; he turns their mourning into rejoicing, into adoring praiſes and thankſgivings to God for the diſplays of his wonderful grace, in triumphing over ſuch unworthineſs as their's hath been, by giving them the joy of his ſalvation. Now Chriſt delivers them from their perplexities, by affording them a comfortable hope that their iniquities are taken away, and their ſins purged, that they are intitled, through the worthineſs of the Redeemer, to the bleſſedneſs of that man "whoſe tranſgreſſions are forgiven;" he lets them know by the ſpirit, that their peace is made with God, and that they are intereſted in all the invaluable bleſſings of his purchaſe; he lets them know that death is not only a conquered enemy, but a friend, and that he can never do them any real harm; their fears of death which they were ready to conclude, would grow ſtronger and ſtronger, have been aſtoniſhingly ſcattered, and they have welcomed it's approach with tranſports of joy, as knowing it is ſent to put an end to all their perplexities, and open a door to endleſs felicity. They ſee by faith the day of immortal glory dawning in their ſouls, and experience ſuch joyful conſolations, as it is not poſſible for them to utter; "eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man fully to conceive of the things which God hath laid up for them that love him," and which they have the raviſhing proſpect of: Their ſouls are ſwallowed up in the foretaſte of what is to come, longing to leap out of the body at once, and enter into glory. There is no earthly comfort but they can now chearfully leave it; once, perhaps, a dear huſband, or a dear wife, a dear brother, or a

dear

dear ſiſter, a dear parent, or a dear child, might make them deſirous of tarrying in the fleſh a little longer; but now they can leave all for Chriſt's ſake, and have an earneſt "deſire to depart, to be with Chriſt, which is far better:" They have not the leaſt reluctance at the thought of leaving the world, but rejoice with joy unſpeakable, in hope of the glory ſoon to be revealed in them.

THUS divinely favored have ſome been, when the ſcenes of life have been cloſing; and however God may be pleaſed to order with regard to others, tho' they ſhould not obtain this joy and gladneſs at death, and have but a ſmall glimmering of hope; yet Chriſt will deliver them alſo by the ſaving ſtrength of his right hand: "Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart." He will deliver them from being ſwallowed up of deſpair; he will deliver them from being ſwallowed up of any of their ſpiritual enemies; tho' ſatan ſhould deſire to have them, as he hath often wiſhed he might, yet Chriſt will keep them ſafe, and none ſhall ever pluck them out of his almighty hands. Tho' in their laſt hours they may not be in the poſſeſſion of thoſe joys that others are and have been, yet there are immortal joys before them, to the poſſeſſion of which he will infallibly introduce them at the conſummation of all things, in that world above, where all darkneſs, "ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away; where the lamb that is in the midſt of the throne, ſhall feed them and lead them to fountains of living water, and God ſhall wipe all tears from their eyes for evermore." There, every thing ſhall "ceaſe from troubling," and there "their weary ſouls ſhall be at reſt;" "now are they the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what they will be, but they know

know that when he ſhall appear, they ſhall be like him, and ſee him as he is :" They " ſhall behold his face in righteouſneſs, they ſhall be ſatisfied, when they awake, with his likeneſs ;" and this will be a perpetually increaſing happineſs.——

I proceed to a practical Improvement.

Firſt. LET us be thankful for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his undertaking for his people. Were it not for him, his people could not enjoy any ſolid comfort, either in life or in death ; it is he who hath appeared to deliver them from the ſad effects of the apoſtacy, ſo far I mean, as that it cannot affect their ſpiritual intereſt : Die indeed they muſt, but then Chriſt " hath appeared to take away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf," ſo that the ſting of death ſhall certainly be removed. It is he, that hath felt the miſeries they endure, and that feels with them ; it is he, who by his ſufferings, hath taken away that curſe that there is in afflictions, with reſpect to the wicked : It is he, who hath deſcended into the grave, that he might ſcatter the horrors of it, and make up a comfortable bed for them againſt that time, when they ſhall " ſleep the ſleep of death :" It it he, who hath engaged to keep them in the dying hour, from falling a prey into the hands of ſatan : It is he, who hath engaged that they ſhall riſe again, and that " where he is, there likewiſe ſhall they be." That is his kind voice to them, " Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe alſo in me. In my father's houſe are many manſions ; if it were not ſo, I would have told you ; I go to prepare a place for you ; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my ſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo." And now is it ſo ? What thanks are due

to

to heaven for the undertaking of this divine perſon? How ſhould believers prize and love him? How concerned ſhould they be to live to his glory, and advance his honor? With what pleaſure and ſatisfaction ſhould they employ their thoughts upon him? And O how agreable ſhould it be to them, to ſpeak of him to one another? How ſhould their ſouls make their boaſt in the Lord? How ſhould the humble when they hear hereof, be glad? How ſhould their ſouls magnify the Lord? And how ſhould they exalt his name together? Well may they adopt that language now, before the king of terrors looks them in the face, "O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

Secondly. LET ſinners ſee to it in earneſt, that they become actually intereſted in this glorious deliverer. While many of God's children are afraid of death, when they have no juſt reaſon for it, you, who have large occaſion to fear, are quite deſtitute of it; pray let me aſk you, what is the reaſon that you are, without any concern upon your minds? Do you ſay, you hope you have made your peace with God? What? Let me aſk you, made your peace with God, and yet continue in your ſins? What? Made your peace with God, and yet never have exerciſed true repentance unto this day? What? Made your peace with God, and ſtill remain ſtrangers to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the glorious method of redemption by him? It cannot poſſibly be; it is one of the greateſt abſurdities imaginable, and proclaims you guilty of the moſt awful madneſs. Should God lay you upon a ſick bed in the ſtate you now are, and you know not but he may

do

do it ſoon, you would inevitably be in a moſt dangerous, tremendous condition; the ſentence of God's broken law, would be in full force againſt you. Whatever comfort you might then have, it would be only "ſparks of your own kindling," with ſome of ſatan's help; or whatever diſtreſs or deſpair you might then be in, it would all be juſt and righteous, and nothing would remain before you but the horrors of eternal darkneſs. How will you bear to hear that ſentence from your inexorable judge, "depart ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?" Oh! how will you endure under a proſpect of this? How would the neglect of paſt opportunities wreck your ſouls? How would your conſciences ſting and torment you? How would hell, as naked before your eyes, and deſtruction without a covering, terrify you? How would the frightful fiends of hell triumph over you, as an eternal prey for their malice and revenge? How would you ſink at laſt into the lake that burns with fire and brimſtone, into the bottomleſs pit, from whence there can never, never be any redemption? Are you willing, O ſinner, that this ſhould finally be your portion? Have you, being forewarned, been forearmed againſt it, ſo that you need not fear with any amazement? O look into this matter tho'roly now, and fear in time, leaſt you ſhould have this at God's hand, to lie down in eternal ſorrow. Make haſte to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath "aboliſhed death," and delivers from the "wrath to come." Look to him in earneſt to turn you from all your ſins, to intereſt you in his perfect righteouſneſs, and ſanctify you by the holy Ghoſt. Look to him that a day of divine power may come upon your ſouls, that you may know by happy experience, what it is to be raiſed from ſpiritual death, by having a divine and

ſpiritual

ſpiritual principal implanted in you, that ſhall habitually and powerfully diſpoſe you to walk in newneſs of life and new obedience. Should you once be ſo favored by divine grace, as to find ſuch a change as this in you, O the bleſſed foundation that would be laid hereby for comfort in your own breaſts! What a glorious alteration would it make in your preſent condition! Such a change as this being effected in you, you muſt be unſpeakably happy in this world, whatever your external circumſtances are, even tho' you ſhould enjoy but a bare exiſtence here; but O how much more happy, inconceivably ſo, would you be in the heavenly world, where you ſhall enjoy perfect and everlaſting happineſs in the immediate preſence of God, the chief good, and fountain of all felicity! O then ſeek this change in earneſt, ſeek it inſtantly, for you know not what a day may bring forth. Death approaches nearer and nearer every moment, as you muſt be ſenſible, if you exerciſe your thoughts upon it: It hath been a dying time among us, and not a few have been ſuddenly removed by death. Wherefore, be "giving all diligence that you may at laſt be found of your Judge in peace; watch therefore, for ye know not when the maſter of the houſe cometh, whether at evening, at midnight, at cock crowing, or in the morning: And what I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all, watch."

Thirdly. WHEN we ſee or hear of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's appearing for any, and delivering them from the fear of death, to which they have been in bondage, let divine grace have all the glory. In this manner, hath our glorious and exalted Redeemer appeared for many in former ages, of which we have had accounts in the hiſtories of their lives, tranſmitted to us. In this manner, hath he ap-

peared for many in later ages, as many can teſtify: In this manner, hath he appeared for ſome of this church, in the years that are paſt, and of ſome within the compaſs of our own obſervation, who are now rejoicing before the throne of God and the Lamb. In this manner, hath he appeared of late for a pious handmaid of his, one of this church, whoſe remains were not long ſince followed to the grave * I am not fond of giving characters of the dead, but there was ſomething ſo ſingular in her caſe, as that I think I ſhould diſobey the call of providence if I did not make ſome public mention of it, that God might be glorified, that the Redeemer might be honored, that the ways of wiſdom may be recommended hereby, and that the diſtreſſed people of God might be comforted from God's gracious dealings with her.

THIS pious perſon deceaſed, dated her firſt ſerious and abiding impreſſions from the time of that terrible earthquake on the 18th of *November*, in the year 1755; when many beſides were awakned, and ſome others of this ſociety. O that ſuch would take a hint from hence, to examine of how long ſtanding their impreſſions have been! While the goodneſs of many, it is to be feared, hath been "as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that paſſeth away," her impreſſions remained till, as we have moſt comfortable grounds to hope, ſhe was ſavingly brought home to God; ſhe dreaded nothing more than apoſtatizing from good beginnings; and made it her daily importunate prayer, that God would not call her away from his preſence, and take his holy ſpirit from her. She was a conſtant devout attender on public worſhip on Lord's days, and upon

* Mrs. MARY GALLOP, Widow, aged 37 Years.

upon occaſional opportunities; and as was judged by ſome, to the injuring of her health: Upon the mention of which to her, her reply was, to this purpoſe, "That time was but a ſmall ſpace to pre-"pare for eternity, and that it had need be im-"proved well." She ſeemed to have a growing delight in remembring God in the ways of his own appointment, and much of her time did ſhe ſpend in her chamber, when the Lord's day was over, in reviewing her behavior, and examining how matters ſtood between God and her own ſoul: It evidently appears to have lain with conſtant weight upon her mind, that ſhe might not be deceived. She had an affecting diſtreſſing ſenſe of the deceitfulneſs of the heart, and of her own heart in particular, and was frequent and moſt importunate in her prayers at the throne of grace, that ſhe might not be left to impoſe a cheat upon her own ſoul. This appeared not only from her converſation about religious matters, in which ſhe was won't to delight; but alſo from her private papers, which ſhe conſented before her death, her friends might make known, if they judged it might be of ſervice to any, and ſo glorify God. In one of her papers I find her expreſſing the ſollicitude of her mind, in this manner, on the morning of a ſacramental ſabbath, when looking into her ſtate:——
"Lord, what ſhall I do? I dare not truſt my ſelf;
"I can do nothing of my ſelf, and yet I dare not
"neglect putting my ſelf on a trial. But I know
"not how to manage it, I know not how to reſt in
"any determination of my own; I am ſo much
"a ſtranger at home, that I am afraid of being de-
"ceived, and I am ſure I ſhall be deceived, if I
"confide in my own ſelf-examinations: Lord ſearch
"me and try me, even my heart and my reins,
"and ſhow me if there be any evil way in me!

" Show me my ſtate, ſhow me the ſtirrings of ſin " in me, and if there be any ſincerity, bear witneſs " to it! Help me to do my part in this great work! " Make me willing to know the worſt of my ſelf! " Divide my mind and my thoughts from vain ob- " jects! Fix my heart on this buſineſs, and keep " me cloſe to my work! Grant me thy preſence " and aid, that I may have a right underſtanding " of the rules by which I am to try my ſelf, and " by which I ſhall be judged in the great day! " Diſcover to me all the wandrings and turnings " of my falſe heart! Lead me into every ſecret " chamber of my ſoul, and make me to know what " is there! Make me rightly to diſtinguiſh between " appearances and realities! Suffer me not to miſ- " take things to my everlaſting hurt! If I have " deceived my ſelf to this day, let me do ſo no " more! If there be any grace in me, let me know " it that I may praiſe thee, and let thy ſpirit bear " witneſs to it, that I may be no longer at a loſs, " and diſhonor thee by doubting! If I live in the " indulgence of any one ſin, Lord diſcover it to " me, in the vileneſs of it, and enable me to repent " in duſt and aſhes! Give me longings of ſoul after " Jeſus Chriſt, and communion with him, and let " me have thy approbation ſealed to me at thy " table, by thy gracious meeting of me there, viſit- " ing me with thy favor, and communicating of " thy ſelf unto me! Lord thou underſtandeſt what " I am, and how it is with me; tho' I may be " miſtaken, yet thou canſt not, and thou canſt keep " me from being miſtaken: O do it for thy mercy's " ſake, do it for thy Son Jeſus Chriſt's ſake! O " do not fail me, I earneſtly beſeech thee, but in " thy light, let me ſee light!"

On another Lord's day ſhe writes thus: " O " Lord God! caſt every thing out of my ſoul that is " contrary

" contrary to thy holy will! Is there any ſin in me " that I rowl as a ſweet morſel under my tongue, " that I have not at preſent the knowledge of? O " diſcover it to me; give me grace to reſiſt it, " and ſtrength to overcome it! O Lord of heaven " and earth! diſcover to me the true ſtate of my " ſoul! I know not what judgment to form of my " ſelf; ſometimes, I hope I am not wholly given " over by thee, but that thy holy ſpirit is at work " upon my ſoul for my final good; at other times, " I fear I am given over to an hard heart, and a " blind mind. O ſhut not the door of mercy upon " me, for thy dear ſon's ſake, who hath died for " ſinners, for great ſinners! O may I never reſt 'till " I can ſay, I know what it is to be born again, to " be renewed in the ſpirit of my mind, and to be " changed into the image of Chriſt! O that the " ſame mind may be in me that was in Chriſt! " O make me holy in heart, make me holy in life, " and in all manner of converſation! Let me not " be dead, while I have a name to live; O let me " not think I am ſomething, when I am nothing!"

NOTWITHSTANDING her cloſe walk with God, which many could not but take notice of; it was her portion, as it is and hath been of many others, to labor under the hidings of God's face, for a conſiderable while together: God led her and brought her into darkneſs and not into light, and very ſore were the temptations with which ſhe was exerciſed from time to time; in the midſt of theſe, her ſoul followed hard after God, who was pleaſed in a wonderful manner to uphold her by his right hand.

UPON another Lord's day ſhe writes thus: " O " Lord of heaven and earth! pardon the ſins of

" this

" this day ! O let not the helliſh, blaſphemous " thoughts, that have this day had an entrance " into my ſoul, ſeparate between thee and me ! O " God ! deliver me for thy great name's ſake ! O " deliver me for thy ſon's ſake, who is my only " refuge ! O let not theſe thoughts have dominion " over me ! O holy Lord God ! caſt theſe dread- " ful thoughts out of my ſoul ! O thou that haſt " the hearts of all in thine hands, and turneſt them " as the rivers of water are turned, O turn thou me, " and I ſhall be turned ! draw me, and I will run " after thee ! O cleanſe my guilty ſoul from all " it's helliſh deformity ! O I am viler than the " beaſts that periſh, and it is becauſe of thine in- " finite mercy, that I am not lifting up my eyes in " hell-torments, crying for a drop of water to cool " my burning tongue. O will that time ever " come, that I ſhall live without offending ſuch an " holy God as thou art ? When I ſhall live free " from indwelling ſin, and ſo from theſe hor- " rible thoughts ? O God ! caſt ſin out of my " ſoul, caſt ſatan out of my ſoul ! O grant it for " Chriſt's ſake, to whom be glory for ever and " ever, amen !"

At another time ſhe writes thus : " O Lord " God that madeſt heaven and earth ! allow me to " make known my requeſt unto thee ! Thou ſearch- " eſt the hearts, and trieſt the reins of the children " of men ; O ſearch me and try me whether there " is not ſome hidden ſin that adds fewel to the " helliſh blaſphemous thoughts, which from time " to time moleſt my ſoul ; and which, if I know " my own ſoul, I deſire this day to be delivered " from ! O God ! deliver me for thy great name's " ſake, O deliver me for thy dear ſon's ſake ! O " look upon Jeſus, look upon thine anointed, and

" for

" for his ſake deliver my ſoul in adverſity! O " Jeſus! thou that didſt caſt ſeven devils out of " Mary Magdalen, caſt ſatan out of my ſoul! " Let him not have dominion over me any more! " O let not ſuch ſhocking blaſphemies againſt the " ſon of God, againſt the ſuffering ſon of God, " again enter into my poor ſoul!"

UNDER all her temptations and ſufferings, ſhe juſtified God, aſcribed righteouſneſs to him, and condemned her ſelf, acknowledging that ſhe was ſo far from being hardly dealt with, that ſhe deſerved more, infinitely more than ſhe had ever yet endured.

IN another place ſhe expreſſes herſelf thus: " O God! if in the midſt of all my fears, there is " one ſpark of grace in my ſoul, O breath in upon " it, that my poor benum'd ſoul may feel ſome " comfort of it! But if thou haſt otherwiſe ap- " pointed, and ſeeſt fit that I ſhould go mourning " all my days; what ſhall I ſay? Thou haſt a " ſovereign right to diſpoſe of thy mercy as thou " pleaſeſt. I acknowledge I have forfeited all " mercy; I have nothing to plead but guilty, " guilty; and if ever I am ſaved, it is becauſe thou " will have mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy. " O keep me from deſpairing of thy mercy! O " keep me from preſuming on thy mercy! O leave " me not, O forſake me not; O leave me not to " my ſelf! I periſh for ever, if left to my ſelf; I " caſt my ſelf at the feet of thy ſovereign mercy, " reſolving that if I periſh, I will periſh there."

IN another place, ſhe appears to have ſome revival concerning her ſelf; when ſhe was aſked indeed whether ſhe had not at ſome ſeaſons ſome

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ſuch revivals, ſhe was always backward to own it, and rather than do it, would ſay, it was perhaps a deluſion; and I would obſerve here, that it is no uncommon thing for perſons in her circumſtances, to contradict their own experiences, thro' fear of drawing a comfortable concluſion, that does not belong to them.

HER own words are theſe, as I find them in writing: "And now, O my ſoul! haſt thou ever "experienced the love of a Savior? Haſt thou ever "taſted that he is gracious? Canſt thou ſay upon "examination, that thou haſt choſen him as "thy portion, and thy all? And canſt thou live "contented without his company? Doſt thou not "long to meet with him, to hear his kind voice, "and ſee his lovely face? Art thou not enquiring, "O thou, whom my ſoul loveth! O that I knew "where I could find thee, who art the chiefeſt a-"mong ten thouſand, and altogether lovely? Art "thou not deſirous to know how thou may'ſt come "at him? Wilt thou go to the third heavens to "be with him there? That time is not yet come; "O when will it come? But is there no enjoying "Chriſt until then? O yes, there is. Rouſe up "then, O my ſoul, and go to his houſe, go to his "table; there ſit under his ſhadow with great de-"light, and let his fruit be ſweet to thy taſte. "There, let your cry be, that he would take you "into his banquetting houſe, and that his banner "over you, may be love. Thou haſt found no "ſatisfaction any where elſe, make haſte to him "then, and while you are afraid to go to his table, "be much more afraid to ſtay away, leaſt you "ſhould diſhonor Chriſt, diſcourage others, and "prevent your own benefit. Bleſſed Jeſus! be-"hold I come as thou haſt invited me; ſhew thy

"ſelf

" ſelf to me, and lift up the light of thy countenance
" upon me ! Bleſſed Jeſus ! I come unto thee, who
" haſt ſaid, look unto me, and be ſaved. Bleſſed
" Jeſus ! I come to thee, who haſt ſaid, Ho, every
" one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he
" that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea,
" come, buy wine and milk without money & with-
" out price. Wherefore do ye ſpend your money
" for that which is not bread, and your labor for that
" which ſatisfieth not ? hearken diligently unto me,
" and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſoul
" delight itſelf in fatneſs. Bleſſed Jeſus ! I come
" unto thee, who haſt ſaid, if any man thirſt, let
" him come unto me and drink. Bleſſed Jeſus !
" I come unto thee, who haſt ſaid, whoſoever will,
" let him come and take of the water of life freely.
" Open my mouth wide, and let my ſoul be filled
" as with marrow and fatneſs ; ſo ſhalt thou put
" gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time,
" when corn and wine and oil are increaſed ! Lord !
" thou art ready to give bread to the hungry, and
" the water of life to him that is thirſty ; but both
" the appetite and the food, the feeling want and
" the relief, are all from thee. O for enlarged
" affections and deſires after this ordinance, anſwer-
" able to my need of it ! Create and ſtir up in me
" earneſt longings after this ordinance, that with
" deſire, I may deſire to eat this paſſover, and that
" it may be a token to me of God's having paſſed
" over my ſins in the day of his anger ! As the
" hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth
" my ſoul after thee, O God ; ſend down thy holy
" ſpirit to provide entertainment for thee in my
" heart ; may it be found ſwept of all ſin ; and
" adorn'd with all ſacramental graces ! " Awake,
" O north wind and come thou ſouth, and blow
" upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may

" flow out, and let my beloved come into his gar-
" den, and eat his pleaſant fruits !"

MANY other experiences of this ſort could I produce from her own writings, in which, in the midſt of great doubts, ſhe ſhowed the higheſt affections for God, for Chriſt and his ordinances, equal to what many have found, who have attained to the full aſſurance of hope.

IT was her practice on Lord's day evenings, to take a ſerious review of the paſt day; inſtead of ſpending that precious part of time, in idle impertinent converſation, as is ſhamefully practiced among many of the profeſſors of chriſtianity, ſhe retired from the world, and ſpent good part, what was not improved in religious diſcourſe, in examining her ſelf, and pouring out her ſoul before God. She ever appeared to be deeply affected with the ſins attending holy time and duties, and ceaſed not to pray for the forgivneſs of them, with the greateſt importunity and ferver, that her profiting might not be hindered.

ON one Lord's day evening ſhe writes thus, and in the like manner at many other times: " O God ! for Chriſt's ſake pardon the ſins of this " ſabbath ! O God ! I bluſh and am aſhamed " when I reflect how my heart hath wandered from " thee in thine houſe; O how long ſhall vain " thoughts lodge within me ! When I would do " good, evil is preſent with me; O wretched ſoul " that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body " of ſin, from this body of death ! O waſh me in " that fountain that is ſet open for ſin and uncleanneſs ! Glory be to thy name that there is any " hope concerning me, that there is a way found

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"out in which thou canſt be juſt, and yet juſtify "the believing ſinner; O enable me to believe "in Chriſt to the ſaving of my ſoul! O that thy "ſpirit may accompany the means thou art uſing "with me, that they may be effectual for my "ſalvation."

She had a moſt humbling ſenſe of her unfruitfulneſs under the means of grace, and bitterly "bewailed it before God.

One evening ſhe writes thus: "O pardon the "ſins of this ſabbath! make me ſenſible O God! "of the vaſt obligations I am under to thee, for "thy ſparing mercy, while many are gone down "to the grave, and numbered among the dead. I "am among the living! O that it may be to praiſe "thee! O Lord! ſend down thy holy ſpirit into "my ſoul, without which all means will prove in-"effectual to my ſalvation! Paul may plant and "Appollos water, but it is God muſt give the in-"creaſe; O let me no longer be as a barren tree "in thy vineyard, but O ingraft me into Chriſt, "by faith, breath into my dead ſoul that I may "live!"

Especially was ſhe affected and diſtreſſed with the ſins ſhe had been guilty of upon a communion-day.

Thus I find her expreſſing her ſelf: "O let not "the ſins of this ſacrament riſe up againſt me in "judgment, in the great day! O let me not with "Judas be a betrayer of my Lord! O let me not "crucify him afreſh by my ſins! O let me not put "him to open ſhame! O let me not be found a-"mong them that ſhall plead, Lord! Lord! have

" we not eat and drank in thy preſence, to whom " Chriſt will ſay, depart from me, I know you not " ye workers of iniquity ! O God ! I moſt earneſt- " ly deprecate this awful doom ; O ſhew me a " token for good, that this will not be my caſe ; " that I may run and not be weary, that I may " walk and not faint !"

God was pleaſed to exerciſe her with great bodily weakneſs and heavy pain, and to confine her to her houſe for about half a year ; during which time, her darkneſs was great, tho' not always in the ſame degree. Under all, her behavior was remarkably patient and ſubmiſſive : The more ſhe underwent, ſhe appeared to be the more aſtoniſhed that ſhe underwent ſo little. She had a conſtant deep ſenſe of the greateſt unworthineſs in her ſelf, and ſeemed to be amazed that God laid his hand ſo lightly upon her. She appeared to have death continually in her eye, and was evidently under deep impreſſions from the importance and ſolemnity of it.

The Wedneſday morning before ſhe expired, thinking her ſelf to be dying, ſhe cried out, " O " whither am I going ! O God ! have mercy up- " on me ! O Lamb of God ! have mercy upon " me ! O waſh my polluted ſoul in thy precious " blood, if it hath never been waſhed before !" And thus ſhe continued praying, for ſome time ; afterwards ſhe appeared more calm, till Thurſday about noon, when her diſtreſs returned. She was exceeding deſirous of ſeeing a certain perſon, with whom ſhe had often converſed concerning ſuch diſtreſs as ſhe was now in : Upon ſeeing the perſon, ſhe cried out, " I am upon the borders of deſpair !" To which it was replied, " that ſhe was too faſt " held by the almighty power of God, to be left

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" to this." She then told the perſon, ſhe had ſent for her to know how far ſhe was left in the day of her temptation; who replyed, that no tongue could deſcribe it: She ſaid, " I am worſe than you for all that."

Upon being intreated to hope in God, and put her truſt in him, who was moved from himſelf and not from any thing in us, ſhe ſaid, " ſhe could as ſoon make a world." In this diſtreſs ſhe continued for about an hour. Not long after ſhe was meditating upon that paſſage of ſcripture, in the 50th Pſalm, " call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me;" ſhe ſaid, " it ſeemed to give her ſome ſmall glimpſe of hope;" and aſking ſome ſtanding by, if they thought this could be from the ſpirit of God? They ſaid they believed it was, and that it was not likely ſatan would be any ways inſtrumental of her enjoying one moment's true peace. She then turned this paſſage into a prayer, and reſolved that ſhe would glorify God, while ſhe had any being.

Some time after ſhe ſaid, " ſhe could not pray;" and then again, calling upon her friends to help her in praying for mercy, ſhe begun her ſelf with the moſt earneſt intreaties of this ſort: " Now is the critical " time, O Jeſus! thou that didſt meet a perſe- " cuting Saul in the way to Damaſcus, O meet me " in the way! meet me in the way, thou that didſt " never caſt away any, when thou waſt here upon " earth! O thou! that hadſt mercy on a Manaſſeh, " have mercy upon me! O let not my unbelief " ſeparate me from thee, but let my unbelief be " ſeparated from my ſoul! Thou eternal Father! " ſhew mercy! Thou eternal Son! ſhew mercy!

" Thou

" Thou eternal Spirit ! ſhew mercy ! O thou un-
" changeable, ever the ſame, promiſe-fulfilling
" God ! thou haſt wrought theſe deſires in my
" ſoul. O fulfil them for me, not for any merit
" in me, but for thy great name's ſake, and thou
" ſhalt have all the glory !" After this her ſpirits revived in a wonderful manner, and God ſeemed to be with her of a truth by his gracious influences. Being almoſt overcome, ſhe fell back on her pillow, and then ſaid moſt earneſtly : " O that I had a
" thouſand tongues to praiſe him ! praiſe him, praiſe
" him, for I want more to praiſe him than I did to
" pray for me." Upon being told it would be a wonder if ſatan did not aſſault her again, ſhe ſaid, " Can I ever doubt again after this ?" One ſpeaking to her of the goodneſs of God in delivering her from the tempter ; yes, ſays ſhe, " the tempter
" was obliged to fly, and I left my burden I don't
" know how, but it was gone in an inſtant."

After a little while, ſhe ſaid, " O now I find,
" I ſee this miſgiving heart of mine ! O ! all
" of you remember for me what is paſt, for it is a
" wonder if I don't get to queſtioning all to morrow
" again ; it ſeemed to me juſt now, as if I could
" chearfully have died, but O the joy was but for
" a ſhort ſeaſon. What ! one glimpſe of glory
" and no more ! return, return, return !" She continued in this frame 'till morning, when ſhe ſaid, " O how hath God baffled ſatan for me ? Surely
" it is a miracle, and if I could give you the whole
" account of it, it would appear ſo to you." But being very much overcome, by ſuch extraordinary exerciſes, ſhe ſaid but little all the next day.

On Saturday, ſome body that came in, told her, ſhe ſeem'd to be better ; not regarding the ſtate of her

her body, she said, "O yes, the fear of death was "taken away in a moment, and I can say, from "my own experience, that there is such a thing as "a death-bed's being comfortable." On being told by some that no body could rejoice more at her welfare, here and hereafter, than they; she said, "I pray "God you may be made partakers of the same "blessedness, and then you will be as happy as I." In the afternoon I visited her, and ask'd whether she could not now say, "I know in whom I have believed?" She said, "I hope I can, I hope I do. "O Sir, what shall I do for God, what shall I do "for Christ?" I told her, all that God expected from her now, was to give him the glory; to which she answered, "O that I had the tongue of "an angel!" In the evening, her mind being clouded, she said, "Do you think this misgiving "heart of mine, don't begin to doubt already?" She was asked, what the cause of it was? She replied, "because I have no more love; I feel like "an infant, and seem to want the arms of Christ "underneath me to uphold me:" And cried out, "O Lord! if it is thy work, return, return; but "if not, let it depart. O what an awful thing "would it be to be deceived, after all this!" On hearing the 50th chapter of Isaiah read, when come to the last verse, she said, "it was she that had "been compassing her self about with sparks of "her own kindling." She was ask'd upon this, if it was of her own kindling, why she did not produce the same joy and peace she had on the Thursday night? O, says she, "I could not do it if I "might gain the world." She was desired to hear the preceeding verse read, "Is any among you that feareth the Lord, &c. let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. O I hope, says she, "I am one that fear the Lord,

"and

" and desire to obey the voice of his servant." Upon this then, said some body, " you may take comfort." Well, says she, " I don't know, God " is sovereign, and hath mercy on whom he will " have mercy." Sometime after she cried out, " two women shall be grinding at a mill, one shall " be taken, and the other left ; and what if I should " be left ?" One said to her, and what if you should be taken ? O then, said she, " heaven and " earth shall resound with his praise." And then again she was in a most joyful frame. Thus she continued 'till towards morning.

On the morning of next day, being Lord's day, she was again in great distress, doubting all again, and cried out, apprehending she was dying, " O " Lord ! if I have never closed with Christ, O help " me now to close with him ! O thou who didst " call Lazarus out of his grave, call my dead soul, " and I will come to thee ! O the dreadful thought " of being separated from God for ever, and con- " signed over to dwell with the wicked, which my " soul abhors ! O Lord I cannot, I will not let " thee go, except thou bless me ! O what would I " give to know that Christ loved me, and that he " gave himself for me !" Being asked, if she could not say that she loved Christ ? She answered, " Do " I love him ? do I love him ? it is the desire of " my soul to love him." This day she had such a sense of the sovereignty of God, and of his justice if he should cast her off for ever, as brought her to appearance into the lowest depths of humiliation ; she seemed so vile in her own eyes, that she could not ask for mercy, and thus remained 'till about four o'Clock in the afternoon, when she broke out into the most surprising expressions of praise to God, that he had once more suffered her to call upon

upon him for mercy; and "brought her up from the horrible pit." Now the fears of death went quite off, and ſhe was wholly contented to ſubmit to it, in any ſhape that God pleaſed. Now her ſoul was full of the love of God; when called to ſee her after meeting at night, ſhe ſpake to me thus, "O Sir, I have been in hell to day, as it were, "and I thought I ſhould have been there for ever "and ever: But God hath delivered my ſoul. O "Sir, praiſe God with me, and praiſe God for me! "You never had ſo much occaſion thro' your whole "miniſtry, as you have now. And if I get to hea-"ven, as I now believe I ſhall, there is not one "there that will have ſo much reaſon to praiſe him "for the riches of his grace, as I ſhall have; O "what a God is this! what a God is this!" And thus over and over, I ſuppoſe for near twenty times together.

WITHOUT any remarkable alteration, ſhe remained 'till next day, when about 6 o'Clock in the afternoon her ſoul took its flight to the heavenly paradiſe; having been a remarkable, conſcientious, upright walker with God, from her firſt being wrought upon by the holy Spirit, a teſtimony for which every one is ready to give, who had the happineſs of an acquaintance with her.

NONE I truſt will be offended at this relation of God's dealings with one, who hath been won't to worſhip with us, with whom ſome of us have taken ſweet counſel, and come to the houſe of God in company. Let us together, and let all who may hear of the ſame, magnify the Lord for what he hath done; let us call upon our ſouls to bleſs his name, ſaying, not unto men, O Lord, not unto means, but unto thy name be all the praiſe!

And now I have a word more by way of addreſs to ſinners. What think you my friends, of a religious life? Is it to be preferred to a life of ſin, or not? "Mark the perfect, and behold the upright," for their "end is peace;" "bleſſed are the dead, which die in the Lord, even ſo ſaith the ſpirit, for they reſt from their labors, and their works do follow them." Compare a life of religion, and a life of ſin together, judge of them by their reſpective ends, and then chuſe you this day which to embrace. I know you are all ready to ſay, "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his"! Be as concerned that the lives you here lead in the fleſh may be ſuch as their's, flowing from the ſame principles; and I doubt not but it will be well with you. Tho' religion is ever attended with croſſes more or leſs, yet it is worth embracing, and will ſtand by you both living and dying, while the joy of the wicked is but for a moment, "like the crackling of thorns under a pot," and expires in endleſs anguiſh.

Let me perſuade you then by the joyful deaths of many of God's children, to chuſe God for your portion as they have done. Let it be the reſolution of each one of you, "as for me I will ſerve the Lord." Don't dare to entertain a thought as tho' their joys were only a deluſion, the products of a warmed imagination; no, not for any thing, leaſt ye be found fighters againſt God: Thoſe joys were the effects of the holy ſpirit's witneſſing with their's to the truth of his own work. No greater happineſs can I wiſh you in this life, than this, that you may experience the ſame divine operations they have had, and find the comfort of it at laſt, as they have found. O chuſe the godly for your companions; follow their examples, and prize their ſociety.—

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Let me in a particular manner recommend this to the younger part of my auditory, "forſake the fooliſh and live, and go in the way of underſtanding;" be the companions of them that "fear God, and keep his commandments." Acquaint your ſelves more with one another for religious purpoſes; I cannot but urge it upon you as a matter deſerving of your conſideration, to form yourſelves into ſocieties for cheriſhing ſerious impreſſions upon one anothers minds, and helping one another forward in the way to heaven. I leave with you thoſe encouraging words, "then they that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they ſhall be mine ſaith the Lord of hoſts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will ſpare them as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him; then ſhall ye return and diſcern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not."

And now let me addreſs my ſelf to the children of God, and thoſe in particular who have been perplexed with the fears and horrors we have been ſpeaking of. Can you find in your hearts to deſpair notwithſtanding what you have heard of God's dealings with many of his ſaints? O let the example I have been ſetting before you, exhilerate your ſpirits. The laſt time I ſaw the perſon lately deceaſed, ſhe ſaid, "O Sir, charge "others from me, by no means to let go their "hope in ſpiritual darkneſs, but to go on waiting "upon God who won't leave them. As for my "ſelf, if my life is ſpared, tho' I have little reaſon "to expect it, I will go to every one I can find,

" that is in the caſe I have been in, and tell them " by no means to give out, for ſuch an one as I, " have obtained mercy." Tho' ſhe is deprived of ſuch an opportunity as this, and happy for her that ſhe is, yet ſhe ſpeaks to the living; ſhe ſpeaks to her friends and acquaintance; ſhe ſpeaks to all chriſtians from her grave, to them that are trembling under the fears of death, in this manner, " be not afraid only believe, remember me."

Rejoice in this, O chriſtian, that there is the ſame God, the ſame Jeſus to appear for you; and that your unworthineſs can never be ſo great as to prevent it. O go on reſiſting temptations, and walk more cloſely with God in duty, both private and public: In all your hours of darkneſs, ſay with the Pſalmiſt, " why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? why art thou diſquieted in me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." Lay up the promiſes in your minds; when you have any comfortable experience on any one day, lay it up againſt the next day, leaſt you fall to doubting again, and more than ever. Labor to be lively and active chriſtians, to walk exemplarily as Chriſt alſo walked, that you may bring in abundant honor to your God and Redeemer; " be not conformed to this world," but more and more " transformed by the renewing of your mind;" " walk circumſpectly, not as fools but as wiſe, redeeming the time." " Stand with your loins girt, and your lamps trimmed and burning;" " be ye not as thoſe virgins" who ſlumbered and ſlept, while the bridegroom tarried; be ye as they that are waiting for the coming of their Lord, and watch, leaſt coming ſuddenly he find you ſleeping; be ye followers of them who thro' faith and patience do inherit the promiſes," and

and ſhortly light may ariſe to you in the darkneſs of death, as it hath to others. O don't dare to think hardly of God or of his ways, becauſe of the long and bitter diſtreſs ſome have been in. That pious handmaid of whom we have been ſpeaking, a few days before her death, ſaid, "She hoped no "body would be diſcouraged on her account from "holding on in the ways of God, or think hardly "of God becauſe of any thing ſhe endured:" No, ſaid ſhe, "let them rather think me happy after I "am dead, even tho' I ſhould be miſerable to all "eternity, than dare to ſay or think any thing "in the leaſt diſhonorary to God, I would not have "them do it for the world." Be not diſcouraged then, O people of God; don't diſhonor your Savior by unbelief: You don't conſider what you are doing, that you are making work for repentance. Lift up the hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble knees, let your hearts wax ſtrong, all ye that wait for the Lord. O ſpeak often one to another, and encourage one another, and the more as ye ſee the day approaching, when the dead in Chriſt ſhall ariſe, "when this corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality; ſo when this corruption ſhall have put on incorruption, and this mortal ſhall have put on immortality, then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, death is ſwallowed up in victory."

FINIS.